

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** Department of Toxic Substances Control  
Hazardous Waste Management Program  
P.O. Box 806, 1001 I Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95812-0806

**Project Title:** Chevron EPC Westside, Second Post Closure Permit and Variance from Groundwater Monitoring Requirements

**Project Location – Specific:** SEC 25 T31S R22E MDBM, near Fellows ( 8 miles NW of Taft and 35 miles.SW of Bakersfield)

**Project Location – City:** Unincorporated

**Project Location – County:** Kern

**Description of Project:**

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) issued a Post Closure Permit and a Groundwater Monitoring Variance for the Chevron EPC Westside Disposal Facility, also known as Westside Disposal Facility, (Facility) to Chevron Environmental Management Company, the current operator of the facility. The Westside Disposal Facility consists of 80 acres located within the Midway-Sunset Oil Field in the southern San Joaquin Valley, approximately 35 miles southwest of Bakersfield, 8 miles northwest of Taft, and 1.7 miles northwest of Fellows, near the extreme western edge of Kern County. The location is an arid environment with deep groundwater at a depth of 675 to 900 feet below ground surface.

The Post Closure Permit includes requirements for site monitoring by regular inspections over a 30-year period and maintenance of financial mechanisms to fund the post-closure activities. The Variance waives the requirements of California Code of Regulations, title 22, division 4.5, Article 6 to install and conduct groundwater subsequent to facility closure.

The Westside Disposal Facility, (Facility) operated as a surface impoundment facility that accepted liquid waste from oil production operations during the period from 1973 to 1981. In 1981, the facility began to accept plating wastes, which contained several hazardous waste constituents, including heavy metals. The facility ceased operation in November 1985. A total of approximately 15.1 million barrels of liquid waste was accepted at the site; the plating wastes comprise less than 4 percent of the total volume of the waste received during the operation of the site. DTSC certified closure of the facility without waste removal in April 1992. The closed Facility consists of two fenced, former disposal areas on a 80-acre site. The fences are six feet high and of chain-link construction. There are several oil producing wells within the boundary of the 80-acre site. These wells are located in the diversion channel area in the southeast corner of the property. This particular section was never used for waste disposal and was isolated from the impoundments by fences. The Facility operated by spreading liquid wastes to a depth of about 30 inches and promoting evaporation and incorporation into the soil.

The facility has been subject to a Post-Closure Permit issued jointly by DTSC and U.S. EPA on January 17, 1992 and a Groundwater Monitoring Variance issued by the California Department Health Services (predecessor to DTSC) on May 14, 1991 to Santa Fe Energy Resources, Inc. (SFER), the previous owner and operator of the facility. The proposed Post Closure Permit includes the same requirements as the Post Closure Permit previously issued to SFER; similarly, the proposed Groundwater Monitoring Variance is a continuation of the waiver of groundwater monitoring requirements issued on May 14, 1991 to SFER.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Chevron Environmental Management Company

**Exempt Status:** *(check one)*

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);  
☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(A));  
☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));  
☐ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_  
☒ General Rule (Sec. 15061(b)(3))

**Exemption Title:** With Certainty, No Possibility of a Significant Environmental Effect

**Reasons Why Project is Exempt:**

1. The proposed Post Closure Permit has the same facility requirements and conditions, including site maintenance, as the Post Closure Permit that is currently in effect. The current Post Closure Permit was issued to SFER, the prior owner/operator.
2. Post-closure care for the EPC Westside facility includes site inspections to assure against the potential for any additional environmental concerns.
3. The proposed Groundwater Monitoring Variance waives the same requirements as the Variance issued in 1991 to SFER.
4. The arid climate in the region limits recharge to the uppermost aquifer and leachate generation. Net evaporation (approximately 96 inches per year) far exceeds net precipitation (approximately 6 inches a year). The lack of driving force limits the potential for waste migration to groundwater.
5. The depth to the uppermost groundwater aquifer (vadose zone thickness) is approximately 675 to 900 feet. The presence of a low permeability stratigraphic unit of 50 to 100 feet of silts and clays (basal alluvial clay) near the base of the vadose zone serves as a potential barrier to the downward migration of liquids and waste constituents.
6. The uppermost aquifer beneath the site is partially saturated with crude oil, producing groundwater of poor water quality. It also contains high dissolved solids and is brackish. Groundwater cannot be used for drinking water, and there are no drinking water wells in the vicinity of the site.
7. In 1990, analysis of groundwater samples collected from two deep piezometers drilled to depths of 773 and 804 feet below ground surface (the uppermost aquifer) indicate that wastes deposited at the site have not contaminated groundwater.

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Susan Solarz  
Lead Agency Contact Person

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Phone #

\_\_\_\_\_  
DTSC Branch Chief Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
DTSC Branch Chief Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
DTSC Branch Chief Title

**TO BE COMPLETED BY OPR ONLY**

**Date Received For Filing and Posting at OPR:** \_\_\_\_\_